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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/688,289	10/13/2000	Robert G. Padingham	584-1033	8885
23644	7590	08/24/2005	EXAMINER	
BARNES & THORNBURG P.O. BOX 2786 CHICAGO, IL 60690-2786			NGUYEN, NGA B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3628	

DATE MAILED: 08/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/688,289

Applicant(s)

PADINHAM ET AL.

Examiner

Nga B. Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2,3,5-10,12,13 and 15-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2,3,5-10,12,13 and 15-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is the answer to the communication filed on October 27, 2004, which paper has been placed of record in the file.
2. Claims 2, 3, 5-10, 12, 13, and 15-28 are pending in this application.

Response to Amendment/Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 2, 3, 5-10, 12, 13, and 15-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 28 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 27. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States

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only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 2, 3, 5-10, 12, 13, 15-21, and 23-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ojha et al (hereinafter Ojha), U.S. Patent No. 6,598,026.

Regarding to claims 2-3, Ojha discloses a method of performing automated reverse auction on an electronic network using a software agent for a party conducting electronic trading (figure 1 and column 8, lines 50-67, the web site at which transactions between buyers and sellers are facilitated is located on a server 102), comprising a transaction engine (column 9, lines 15-18, a series of graphical user interfaces which will be used to illustrate the transaction process); a negotiation engine driven by the transaction engine (figures 15-17 and column 18, lines 30, a series of graphical user interfaces allow buyers and sellers submit bids and counteroffers); and a store of a plurality of negotiation profiles; and means responsive to the commercial situation or state of the party to select an optimal negotiation profile appropriate to that situation or state, and to cause the transaction engine to initiate or conduct e-commerce negotiations using the negotiation engine programmed with the selected negotiation profile (figures 13A-13K and column 15, line 30-column 16, line 67, the business rules associated with each seller is equivalent to negotiation profiles, the seller authorizes automated responses to bids by specifying a number of business rules to govern the responses).

Claim 5 contains similar limitations found in claims 2-3 above, therefore, are rejected by the same rationale.

Regarding to claims 6-7, Ojha further discloses in which each buyer is represented by a software agent, each seller is represented by a software agent. (figure 1 and column 8, lines 50-67, buyers represented by computers 122 and file server 116, sellers represented by servers 108).

Regarding to claim 8, Ojha further discloses comprising the use of an intermediate software agent between the buyers and the or each seller, for negotiating a contract between the or each seller and the collective buyers (figure 1 and column 8, lines 50-67, the web site at which transactions between buyers and sellers are facilitated is located on a server 102).

Claims 9, 10, 12 contain similar limitations found in claims 2-3 above, therefore, are rejected by the same rationale.

Regarding to claim 13, Ojha further discloses arranged to conduct an automated reverse auction on an electronic network using software agents for buyers and sellers (column 5, lines 40-55).

Regarding to claims 15-21, Ojha further discloses in which each software agent is a component of a distributed architecture (figure 1 and column 8, lines 50-67, servers 102, 108, 116).

Regarding to claims 23-24, Ojha further discloses a communications network comprising a system according to claim 27, in which the network consists of the Internet (figure 1 and column 7, lines 35-45).

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Regarding to claims 25-26, Ojha further discloses computer program for creating a system according to claim 27, a computer program for creating a software agent according to Claim 2 (column 22, line 53-column 23, line 12).

Regarding to claims 27-28, Ojha discloses a system and method for performing automated reverse auction comprising the steps of:

a first software agent (figure 1 and column 8, lines 50-67, the web site at which transactions between buyers and sellers are facilitated is located on a server 102), comprising a transaction engine (column 9, lines 15-18, a series of graphical user interfaces which will be used to illustrate the transaction process); a negotiation engine driven by the transaction engine (figures 15-17 and column 18, lines 30, a series of graphical user interfaces allow buyers and sellers submit bids and counteroffers); and a store of a plurality of negotiation profiles; and control means responsive to the commercial situation or state of the party to select an optimal negotiation profile appropriate to that situation or state. and to cause the transaction engine to initiate or conduct e-commerce negotiations using the negotiation engine programmed with the selected negotiation profile, receiving a request for a service from a buyer (figures 13A-13K and column 15, line 30-column 16, line 67, the business rules associated with each seller is equivalent to negotiation profiles, the seller authorizes automated responses to bids by specifying a number of business rules to govern the responses);

the first software agent requesting negotiation for provision of the service with at least one other agent (figure 16, the user interface allows the buyer to submit bids and counteroffers to the sellers); and

the first software agent responding to a proposal for providing provision of the service from a second agent (figure 17, the user interface allows the seller submit response or counteroffers to the buyer).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ojha et al (hereinafter Ojha), U.S. Patent No. 6,598,026.

Regarding to claim 22, Ojha does not disclose the software is implemented as FIPA open source. However, implementing a software as FIPA open source is well known in the art. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Ojha's to adopt the well known feature above for the purpose of performing automated reverse auction.

Conclusion

9. Claims 2, 3, 5-10, 12, 13, and 15-28 are rejected.

10. The prior arts made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

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Aggarwal et al. (US 6,886,000) disclose on-line negotiations with dynamic profiling.

Force (US 6,704,716) discloses method and system for conducting an online transaction that allows the seller and bidder to negotiate.

Tavor et al. (US 6,553,347) disclose automatic virtual negotiations.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to examiner Nga B. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 273-6796. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 9:00AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hyung S. Sough can be reached on (571) 272-6799.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-3600.

12. Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

C/o Technology Center 3600

Washington, DC 20231

Or faxed to:

(571) 273-8300 (for formal communication intended for entry),

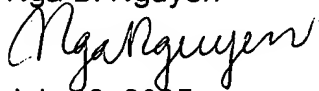
or

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(571) 273-0325 (for informal or draft communication, please label
"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT").

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Knox building, 501 Dulany
Street, Alexandria, VA, First Floor (Receptionist).

Nga B. Nguyen

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Nga B. Nguyen', written in black ink.

July 19, 2005